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A NEW SPECIES OF *CEROPEGIA* LINN. (ASCLEPIADACEAE) FROM THE WESTERN GHATS IN MAHARASHTRA STATE (INDIA)

Ceropegia jainii Ansari et Kulkarni *sp. nov.*

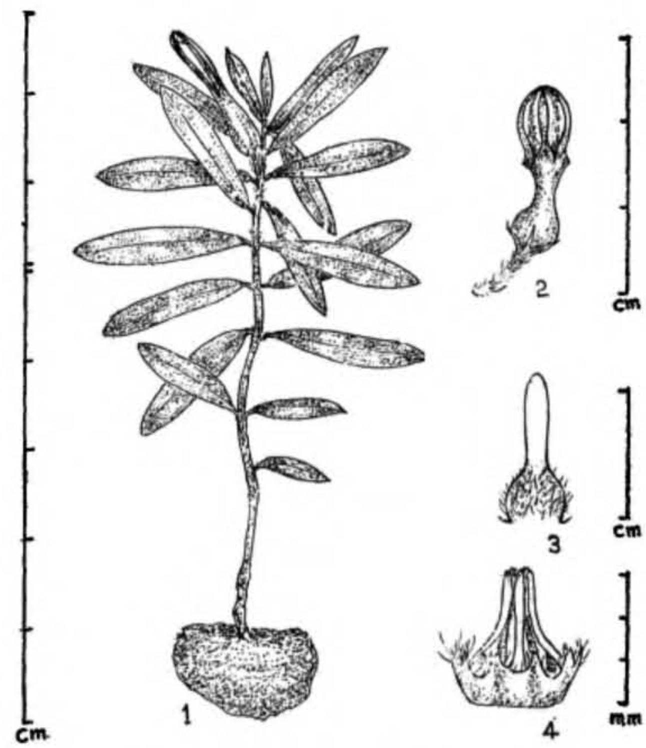
Cercpegia pusillae Wt. et Arn. affinis in habitu pumilo et cymis unifloris, sed differt foliis ellipticis, floribus usque ad 2 cm longis, corollae lobis ovatis et intus basi pilosis, et tubo aequantibus.

Holotypus (*Kulkarni* 121885A) et isotypi (*Kulkarni* 121885 B-F) lecti ad Ambolighat in dist. Ratnagiri ditione Maharashtra die 13th Augusti anni 1971; holotypus positus in *CAL*; isotypi *Kulkarni* 121885 B-C in *BSI*; D in *CAL*; E in *K*; F in *BLAT*.

Ceropegia jainii Ans. et Kulk. *sp. nov.*

Similar to *Ceropegia pusilla* Wt. et Arn. in its dwarf habit and uniflowered cymes, but differs in its leaves being elliptic, flowers upto 2 cm long only, corolla lobes ovate and pilose inside at the base only, and equal to the tube.

The holotype (*Kulkarni* 121885A) and the isotypes (*Kulkarni* 121885 B-F) were collected at Ambolighat, Ratnagiri dist., Maharashtra State on 13-8-1977. The holotype is deposited in *CAL*; isotypes *Kulkarni* 121885 B-C in *BSI*; D in *CAL*; E in K; F in *BLAT*.



Ceropegia jainii Ans. et Kulk. *sp. nov.*
Figs. 1-4 : 1. A whole plant. 2. A flower. 3. Ventral view of a fully opened corolla lobe showing hairs at the base. 4. A corona.

An erect herb, 6-10 cm in height with subglobose or depressed tubers. Stem unbranched, rarely 2, from the same tuber, sparingly pubescent in the upper half, glabrous in the lower half. Leaves 2 - 4 × 0.5 - 1.0 cm, opposite petiolate, upper elliptic-linear, lower elliptic, green and hairy above and along the margins, pale and glabrous beneath, except the nerves; petiole 1 - 2 mm long, hairy; bracts 1.5 - 2 mm long; pedicel 4 - 6 mm long, hairy or glabrescent. Calyx 2.5 mm long, glabrous straight. Corolla up to 2 cm long, curved, purplish throughout except lower half of inflated base which is greenish; tube 9 - 10 mm long, subcylindrical, inside pale greenish with longitudinal purple lines, with globosely inflated base in the lower 1/3 - 1/2 part, glabrous inside & outside; lobes 9 - 10 mm long, purple, linear-oblong, glabrous above except inside the ovate-deltoid base which is short bristly white hairy with margins of the lobes slightly reflexed, acute and connate at apex forming an ovoid or subglobose head, *ca* 7 mm across. Outer corona cupular, of 5 deeply bifid, deltoid lobes, 1.5 mm in height, hairy along the margins, slightly longer than the gynostegium; inner processes *ca* 2.5 mm long, linear-subspathulate, erect. Pollen masses ascending minute, yellow. Gynostegium *ca* 2 mm long. Follicles not seen. (Figs. 1-4).

Fls.: August.

Distinguishing features of *C. jainii sp. nov.* and *C. pusilla* Wt. et Arn. are tabulated below to highlight the distinctness of the former.

C. jainii Ans. et Kulk. *sp. nov.*	*C. pusilla* Wt. et Arn.
1. 6-10 cm high	1. 7-15 cm high
2. Leaves elliptic, 2-4 cm long	2. Leaves linear, 3-5 cm long
3. Corolla 1.8-2 cm long, lobes almost equal to tube	3. Corolla up to 2.8 cm long ; lobes distinctly shorter than tube
4. Corolla tube purple except pale greenish in lower half of inflated base, logitudinal purple lines inside	4. Corolla tube inflated in the lower 1/3 part
5. Corolla lobes linear-oblong, purple, glabrous above from ovate-deltoid base with white bristly hairs inside	5. Corolla lobes linear-oblong and glabrous all over
6. Corona : outer corona 5, bifid, bristly hairy inside & along margin ; inner erect, purple towards base, above yellow	6. Corona : outer corona 5, bifid minutely ciliate ; inner erect.

ETYMOLOGY

This species is named in honour of Dr. S. K. Jain, Director, Botanical Survey of India, Howrah who has been closely associated with studies on the Flora of Western India.

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